AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 22, and 23, and add new claims 24-32, as denoted in the following listing. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A method of eliminating an unwanted connection to a destination associated with a node in a network, comprising ~~the steps of~~:

receiving, at the node, a signal requesting a connection to the destination;

determining a source of the signal;

determining, at the node, preference information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source; ~~and~~

requesting the connection between the source and the destination based on the determination of the preference information; and

updating the preference information based on whether the connection is accepted in response to the connection request.

2. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

determining, at the node, whether the connection was accepted; and

compensating the destination when the connection was accepted and the determination of the preference information resulted in a determination that the destination did not desire to accept the connection ~~modifying information associated with the destination~~.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein requesting the connection between the source and the destination, further comprises:

sending a caller-id signal indicating the desire on behalf of the destination to accept the connection.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein requesting the connection between the source and the destination, further comprises:

sending a caller-id signal indicating the destination does not desire to accept the connection.

5. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 4, further comprising ~~the step of~~:

declining, at the destination, the connection based on the preference information.

6. (Currently amended) A system for eliminating an unwanted connection to a destination associated with a node in a network, comprising:

means for receiving, at the node, a signal requesting a connection to the destination;

means for determining a source of the signal;

means for determining, at the node, preference information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source; ~~and~~

means for requesting the connection between the source and the destination based on the determination of the preference information; and

means for updating the preference information based on whether the connection is accepted in response to the connection request.

7. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 6, further comprising:

means for determining, at the node, whether the connection was accepted; and

means for compensating the destination when the connection was accepted and the means for determining preference information determined that the destination did not desire to accept the connection ~~modifying information associated with the destination~~.

8. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein the means for requesting the connection between the source and the destination based on the determination, further comprises:

means for sending a caller-id signal indicating the desire on behalf of the destination to accept the connection.

9. (Original) The system according to claim 6, wherein the means for requesting the connection between the source and the destination based on the determination, further comprises:

means for sending a caller-id signal indicating the destination does not desire to accept the connection.

10. (Currently amended) The system according to claim 6, further comprising:

means for declining, at the destination, the connection based on the preference information.

11. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium capable of configuring a computer to perform a method of eliminating an unwanted connection to a destination associated with a node in a network, comprising:

program code for receiving, at the node, a signal requesting a connection to the destination;

program code for determining a source of the signal;

program code for determining, at the node, preference information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source; ~~and~~

program code for requesting the connection between the source and the destination based on the determination of the preference information; and

updating the preference information based on whether the connection is accepted in response to the connection request.

12. (Currently amended) The computer-readable medium according to claim 11, further comprising:

program code for determining, at the node, whether the connection was accepted; and

program code for modifying an account associated with the destination when the connection was accepted and the program code for determining preference information determined that the destination did not desire to accept the connection.

13. (Original) The computer-readable medium according to claim 11, wherein the program code for requesting the connection between the source and the destination based on the determination, comprises:

program code for sending a caller-id signal indicating the desire on behalf of the destination to accept the connection.

14. (Original) The computer-readable medium according to claim 11, wherein the program code for requesting the connection between the source and the destination based on the determination, comprises:

program code for sending a caller-id signal indicating the destination does not desire to accept the connection.

15. (Currently amended) The computer-readable medium according to claim 14, further comprising:

program code for declining, at the destination, the connection based on the preference information.

16. (Currently amended) A node within a network for eliminating unwanted calls, comprising:

an input for receiving a signal, from a source, requesting a connection to a destination;

a processor for determining a source of the signal;

a registry for storing information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source; and

a signaling module for providing the information to the destination and requesting the connection between the source and the destination,

wherein the processor and signaling module update the information in the registry based on whether the connection is accepted.

17. (Original) The node according to claim 16, further comprising:

a memory for storing information indicating an account balance for the destination; and

wherein the processor modifies the account balance based upon whether the destination accepts the connection.

18. (Original) The node according to claim 16, wherein the signaling module utilizes caller-id signaling.

19. (Currently amended) A computer-readable medium referenced by a node within a network for eliminating unwanted phone calls comprising:

information identifying at least one destination;

information identifying at least one source; and

information reflecting a desire on behalf of the at least one destination to accept a connection from the at least one source, wherein the information reflecting a desire on behalf of the at least one destination is updated based on behavior of the destination.

20. (Original) The computer-readable medium according to claim 19, further comprising:

information tracking a history of accepted calls by the at least one destination.

21. (Original) The computer-readable medium according to claim 19, further comprising:

information tracking a history of declined calls by the at least one destination.

22. (Currently amended) A processor within a network for eliminating unwanted calls, comprising:

~~an~~ input means for receiving a signal requesting a connection to destination;

a module for determining a source of the signal;

a module for determining information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source; and

~~an~~ output means for requesting a connection between the source and the destination based on the determination; and

means for updating the information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source based on behavior of the destination.

23. (Currently amended) A node for receiving a connection across a network, comprising:

an input means for receiving a signal requesting a connection from a source;

means for identifying information reflecting a desire on behalf of the node to accept the connection from the source; and

means for establishing the connection between the node and the source based on the information; and

means for updating the information reflecting a desire on behalf of the node to accept a connection from the source based on behavior of the node.

24. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source is based in part on behavior of the source.

25. (New) The system of claim 6, wherein the information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source is based in part on behavior of the source.

26. (New) The computer-readable medium of claim 11, wherein the information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source is based in part on information indicating types of sources from which the destination has previously accepted connections.

27. (New) The node of claim 16, wherein the information reflecting a desire on behalf of the destination to accept a connection from the source is based in part on information indicating types of sources from which the destination has previously accepted connections.

28. (New) A method of eliminating an unwanted connection to a destination associated with a node in a network, comprising the steps of:

receiving, at the node, a signal requesting a connection to the destination;

determining a source of the signal;

determining, at the node, whether or not the source is an approved source based on approval information, wherein the approval information is based in part on behavior of the destination;

requesting the connection between the source and the destination when the source is an approved source; and

determining whether the source accepts a charge associated with the connection when the source is not an approved source and, if the unapproved source accepts the charge, requesting the connection between the unapproved source and the destination, including notifying the destination that the source is not an approved source.

29. (New) The method of claim 28, further comprising updating the approval information based on whether the connection was accepted in response to the connection request when the source is an approved source.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, further comprising updating the approval information based on whether the connection was accepted in response to the connection request between the unapproved source and the destination.

31. (New) The method of claim 28, further comprising compensating the destination when the destination accepts the connection from the unapproved destination.

32. (New) The method of claim 31, wherein compensating comprises automatically crediting an account associated with the destination.